

INFORMATION LETTER

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Motor Carrier Bill Passed by Senate

The Senate on April 16th passed in amended form the Wheeler bill (S. 1629) to regulate motor carriers. The bill provides for the regulation by the Interstate Commerce Commission of all agencies engaged in for-hire motor transportation. Regulation for contract carriers is less extensive than that proposed for common carriers. No regulation is proposed for private carriers except that the Commission would be authorized to regulate the "qualifications and maximum hours of service of employees and safety of operation and equipment" in event the Commission determines there is need for such regulation.

In Answer to Questions About Grading Service

Canners in the Midwest who have received letters from the Chicago office of the U. S. Bureau of Agricultural Economics regarding its canned food grading service have written to the Association inquiring whether such inspection and grading is a new requirement in connection with labeling.

The confusion arising from the Bureau's letter is doubtless due to erroneous reports that have gained circulation to the effect that grade labeling would be required some time in the near future, combined with the statement in the Bureau's letter that "an increased demand for grade certification is anticipated in view of the fact that many newly designed labels will be used, stating the grade of the product." The Association on March 20 issued a statement setting out the facts in the labeling situation, and there has been no change since that date.

The grading service of the Bureau of Agricultural Economics is now available to canners who wish to use it, on the same basis as in previous years. It is entirely voluntary and on a fee basis.

Administrative Council to Meet

A meeting of the Administrative Council will be held at the Washington office of the Association on April 23 and 24. Following this meeting, the subcommittee on descriptive terms for canned corn will meet.

Increased Funds for Agricultural Research Proposed

The Senate Committee on Agriculture and Forestry has reported without amendment the bill (S. 2228) introduced by Senator Bankhead, which would provide for the more complete endowment and support of land-grant colleges and agricultural experiment stations. One provision of this bill would increase the appropriation for research work by \$1,000,000 for the fiscal year ending June 30, 1936, and for each of the four fiscal years thereafter by \$1,000,000 more than for the preceding fiscal year, thus making an additional \$5,000,000 available for this work after the year 1940.

Assessments under Wholesale Fruit and Vegetable Code

The Association has recently received letters from canners upon whom drafts have been drawn by the Code Authority of the Wholesale Fresh Fruit and Vegetable Distributive Industry to cover assessments under that code. For the information of Association members who may have had similar experiences there are reproduced the following paragraphs from Bulletin No. 11 of the Code Authority for the Canning Industry.

"(a) A canner who purchases and receives fresh fruit and vegetables from a producer for the purpose of canning such products is not subject to this Wholesale Code. Nor is any canner, who is also a grower and who markets his surplus produce as a grower, subject to this Code, which specifically excludes the production, preparation, assembling, or loading at points of production of fresh fruits and vegetables, and specifically cannot be applied to 'prevent anyone from marketing or trading produce of his farm.'

"(b) Where a canning concern is also engaged in the business of receiving, buying and selling fresh fruits and vegetables as a wholesaler, but the principal business of such concern is canning, it is not at the present time required to pay assessments to the Wholesale Fresh Fruit and Vegetable Code Authority. It is, however, subject to the Code in all other respects, that is, on its wholesale fruit and vegetable distributive operations."

Damage Caused by Recent Frosts

As a result of the frost on the night of April 16th in Barnswell County, South Carolina, 25 per cent of the melon cantaloupe crop was destroyed, according to reports to the Department of Agriculture. Considerable damage was reported for beans in the Lake City King's Tree section, South Carolina. No damage was reported in the Allendale and Hampden sections of North Carolina, nor in southern Georgia.

At Mount Tabor, North Carolina, beans were damaged to the extent of 25 to 35 per cent. There was no damage in Wilmington or Mount Olive sections, due to strong winds.

Frost and freeze on the nights of April 15th and 16th caused some damage to fruit crops in Virginia. Temperatures west of the Blue Ridge went as low as 22 degrees. In that section peaches were light, due to winter damage, and now have been largely killed. East of the Blue Ridge, temperatures dropped to slightly below freezing but there was only slight damage to peaches, which promise a good crop. South of Albemarle, apples were mostly in bloom and suffered some injury, but in the Shenandoah Valley and from Albemarle north, buds were not sufficiently opened to be injured, except for some early blooming varieties which were showing pink. Apple prospects are still favorable.

In West Virginia there was spotted damage to Yorks and some minor varieties of apples also are reported to have been injured. Those few peach buds which escaped winter killing are now killed. There was some injury to sour cherries.

Fruit and Vegetable Market Competition

CARLOT SHIPMENTS AS REPORTED BY THE BUREAU OF AGRICULTURAL ECONOMICS,
DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

Commodity	Week ending April 13		Week ending April 6		Total for season through April 13	
	1934	1935	1935	1935	1934	1935
Vegetables:						
Beans, snap and lima.....	445	273	349	7,846	5,264	
Tomatoes.....	606	1,036	952	7,124	6,681	
Green peas.....	276	135	68	2,473	1,560	
Spinach.....	333	157	204	6,695	4,532	
All other vegetables:						
Domestic—						
Competing directly....	4,416	4,000	4,435	74,877	66,530	
Competing indirectly..	32	79	93	32,214	48,862	
Imports—						
Competing directly....	20	36	28	316	561	
Competing indirectly...	5	12	18	360	954	
Fruits:						
Citrus, domestic.....	3,028	4,141	1,752	73,388	84,787	
Imports.....	27	5	5	562	293	
Others, domestic.....	523	418	237	16,486	18,906	

Container Bill Favorably Reported

The House Committee on Agriculture has reported favorably a bill (S. 1460) which would consolidate four existing statutes on containers and extend the principle of container standardization to include drums, cartons, crates and boxes. It also would require the marking of containers to show the identity of the manufacturer and the capacity of the container, likewise annual reports on the production by container manufacturers.

Favorable Report Ordered on Lobbying Bill

The subcommittee of the Senate Judiciary Committee which has been considering the Black bill (S. 2512) has ordered a favorable report on the measure to the full committee. This is the bill designed to control lobbying by defining lobbyists, requiring their registration, and providing for reports upon their activities.

Bill to Extend Hospital Benefits to Fishermen

A bill (H. R. 7570) extending the benefits of the marine hospital service to persons engaged in fishing operations in vessels of five tons, or over or less, has been introduced in the House by Delegate Dimond of Alaska.

Stay of Price Filing Provisions of Pickle Packing Code Sought

The Code Authority for the pickle packing industry has asked that the price filing provisions of the code be stayed until June 16. Comments on the application must reach Deputy Administrator Weld M. Stevens, 505 Barr Bldg., Washington, before May 2.

Director Named for Standards Unit of Consumers Advisory Board

H. A. Moreness, of New York City, has been appointed to direct the work on consumer standards of the Consumers Advisory Board of the National Recovery Administration. For the past two years he has been director of the technical bureau of the National Federation of Textiles, the trade organization representing silk and rayon broad goods manufacturers. Before that he was chief chemist of the DuPont plant at Carney's Point, N. J.; with the National Spun Silk Co., New Bedford, Mass., and manager for the Orient for the General Silk Importing Co., Japan.

Cost of Producing Canning Factory Tomatoes

The New York State College of Agriculture has issued a mimeographed bulletin on the cost of producing canning tomatoes on 118 farms in western New York in 1934. The summary of the report states:

"Returns from canning factory tomatoes in western New York in 1934 were fairly satisfactory when compared with other farm enterprises in that year. There was a high variation between farms in returns received. Some farmers failed to receive enough to pay costs other than labor and received nothing for their labor. Others were able to pay all costs and receive more than \$1.00 an hour for all labor

on tomatoes. The group of 118 farmers received an average of 35 cents per hour of labor spent on the tomato enterprise."

Avoiding Over-Fill of Spinach

In the Information Letter for March 16, there was given a recent announcement of the Food and Drug Administration reducing the required cut-out weight of drained solids of No. 10 spinach to 60 ounces pending the conclusion of a study that is now being made of the processing of spinach. It is well known that the heat penetration of spinach is markedly influenced by the amount of spinach filled into the can. The processes that have been adopted for spinach are based on certain specific weights of drained solids, and if the amount of spinach filled into the can is unduly high, these processes are not adequate to protect the product from spoilage or to safeguard the health of the consumer.

The minimum cut-out weight of drained solids now required by the Department of Agriculture is as follows:

No. 2	cans—13 ounces.
No. 2½	" —(19 ozs.) 1 lb. 3 ozs.
No. 3	" —(21.5 ozs.) 1 lb. 5.5 ozs.
No. 10	" —(60 ozs.) 3 lbs. 12 ozs.

Packers should make frequent cuttings of their product after processing and cooling to determine the weight of drained solids. It is important to comply with the weights given above, but it is also of the utmost importance not to exceed those weights to a greater extent than is necessary in order to safely comply with them.

In addition to decreasing the amount of spinach packed into No. 10 cans, it has been found necessary to increase the process for No. 10 spinach to 60 minutes at 252°. The processes of the other sizes of cans remain as given in Bulletin 26-L.

Sardine Industry in Nantes District of France

The sardine catch in the Nantes consular district amounts to 15,000 tons, valued at 38,000,000 francs, which is about 60 per cent of the entire French catch, according to the American consul at Nantes. The majority of French sardine canneries are situated in proximity to important sardine ports. Consequently, 158 of the 170 French sardine canneries are to be found within the confines of the Nantes district and they employ 9,700 of the total of 10,500 laborers in the industry. It is estimated that cannery purchase a minimum of 70 per cent of the catch throughout the district, or 10,500 metric tons, worth 26,600,000 francs.

Fish are purchased at from 2,000 to 3,000 francs per ton. Labor costs in canneries are as follows: Workmen, 26 to 34 francs per day; women laborers, 14 to 18 francs per day. Employees also are furnished round trip tickets from home to cannery for workers remaining six months; lodging, heat, light, and fuel.

The costs of a case of 100 boxes of sardines are estimated as follows, in francs: Cans, 40.50; peanut oil, 10.85; coal, 1.25; salt, 0.60; female labor, 8.85; opening keys, 0.30; overhead, 18.50; fish (if at 2,000 francs per metric ton), 37.72; sales costs, 6.60; total, 125.17 francs.

The annual French consumption of canned sardines is estimated at 30,000 metric tons. With a domestic production of 20,000 tons, and exports of 2,000 tons, this leaves only 12,000 tons to be imported to fill domestic requirements. However, imports have been coming recently at the rate of 25,000 tons a year, which has glutted the market.

In 1933, there were imported 20,510 tons of canned sardines, principally from Portugal, Morocco, and Spain, and only 2,173 tons were exported to all countries. Exports from the consular district to the United States decreased steadily from 189 metric tons in 1928 to 42 in 1934.

At the end of the 1934 summer season, only about 90 of the 158 canneries in the district were in operation, while many ports stopped fishing being unable to dispose of their catches. Sardine fishermen's earnings during the past three years have decreased by 40 per cent, being well below the earnings of fishermen for most other species of fish for the same years.

The present extraordinary depression is attributed to four principal causes: Heavy production in 1934, and a decrease in consumption; insufficient customs protection against Portugal and Spain; a recent increase of the import quotas granted to these two countries, and the privileged situation of Moroccan canners, both as to production costs and liberal entry into France; high prices in France of labor, fish, and cans; excessive taxation.

Pineapple Developments in Malaya

Pineapple supplies in Singapore and Johore continued to be limited in January, and factories were working only intermittently, according to a report by the American trade commissioner in Singapore. Prices for fruit consequently remained high. With the maturing of young rubber, many holdings in Johore carrying pineapples as a catch crop are being cleared of the plants. A recent innovation in one Singapore factory is the canning of pineapple cores for export to Canada. The cores are packed in 8-pound tins.

Exports of Malayan canned pineapple in December were 8,840 tons, making the total exports for the year 66,633 tons, as compared with 5,242 tons in December, 1933, and 59,582 tons for the entire year 1933. Of the exports in 1934 Canada took 7,944 tons and the United States 616 tons.

"Sodus" Name of New Purple Raspberry

The name "Sodus" has been selected by the New York State Experiment Station for a purple raspberry seedling that is described as the most promising purple berry to fruit on the Station grounds in recent years. Sodus is the result of a cross between Dundee, one of the Station's new black raspberries, and Newburgh, a new red raspberry of outstanding merit. Stock of the new variety is being propagated and distributed by the New York Fruit Testing Association with headquarters in Geneva, although the supply this spring is somewhat limited.

Pea Seed Decay Easily Stopped

Losses in canning peas through decay of the seed after planting can be largely eliminated by treatment of the seed with red copper oxide, according to a statement by Dr. James G. Horsfall, plant disease specialist at the New York State Experiment Station, in addressing the twelfth annual canners school at the Station. He stated that in three years' tests the early, high-quality Surprise variety, which is notable for its susceptibility to decay organisms in the soil, responded to the red copper treatment to a greater extent than did any of the standard canning varieties employed in the experiments. A brief summary of Dr. Horsfall's findings on pea seed treatment for the past three years may be obtained from the Station upon request.

Frozen and Preserved Fruits in Cold Storage

The following table shows the holdings of fruit in cold storage reported by the Bureau of Agricultural Economics as of April 1, also a comparison with last year and with a five-year average:

	April 1 1935	April 1 1934	Five-year average
Apples:			
Barrels	174,000	188,000	315,000
Boxes	4,242,000	3,766,000	5,151,000
Baskets	3,238,000	2,062,000	2,172,000
Pears:			
Boxes	148,000	85,000	259,000
Baskets	4,000	24,000	14,000
Frozen and preserved fruits (pounds) ..	47,749,000	46,180,000	56,540,000

Cold Storage Holdings of Fishery Products Increase

Cold storage holdings of fishery products in the United States on March 15 were 90 per cent more than a year ago and 14 per cent over the five-year average, according to the U. S. Bureau of Fisheries. Holdings on March 15 amounted to 35,213,000 pounds, compared with 18,513,000 pounds on March 15, 1934, and the five-year average of 30,817,000 pounds.

Forecast of Freight Movement

Freight car loadings in the second quarter of 1935 are expected to be about one-tenth of one per cent above the actual loadings in the corresponding quarter of 1934, according to estimates by the Regional Shippers Advisory Boards of the American Railway Association. The estimated car loadings of canned goods, including all canned food products and catsup, jams, jellies, olives, pickles, preserves, etc., are 31,895 cars, as compared with actual loadings of 32,705 cars in the second quarter of 1934. This is a decrease of 2.5 per cent.

March Department Store Sales

Department store sales increased from February to March by considerably more than the estimated seasonal amount. The Federal Reserve Board's index, which makes allowance for differences in the number of business days, for usual seasonal movements, and for changes in the date of Easter, was 80 in March, on the basis of the 1923-25 average as 100, compared with 75 in February and 72 in January. Sales in March were smaller than a year ago by 8 per cent.

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